

In the claims:

1. (currently amended) A process for increasing the molecular weight and/or viscosity of a polyester or a copolyester, which process comprises

heating in a mixer or extruder a polyester or a copolyester to the melting point or up to 50°C above the melting point or 50°C to 150°C above the glass transition point of the polyester or copolyester,

with the addition of at least one aromatic dicyanate and at least one further compound selected from the group consisting of the sterically hindered hydroxyphenyl-alkyl-phosphonic esters or monoesters, ~~diphosphonites~~ and secondary aromatic amines,

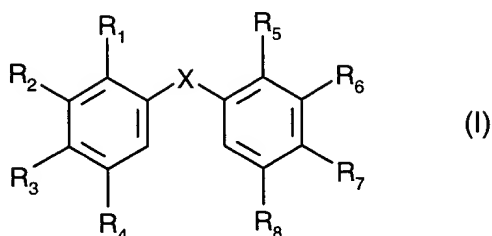
wherein the polyester or copolyester remains in the thermoplastic state after the process.

2. (canceled)

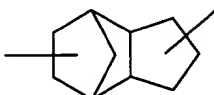
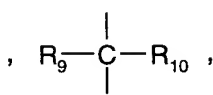
3. (previously amended) A process according to claim 1, wherein at least one difunctional epoxide is additionally employed.

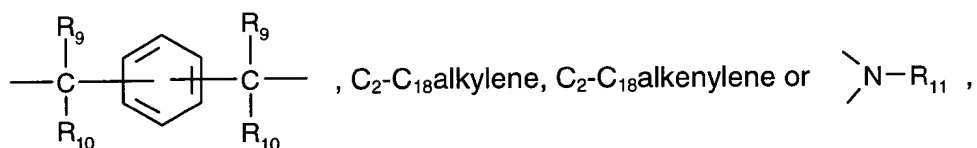
4. (previously amended) A process according to claim 1, wherein the polyester or copolyester is a recyclate.

5. (original) A process according to claim 1, wherein the aromatic dicyanate is a compound of the formula I



in which

X is a direct bond, oxygen, sulfur, -SO-, -SO₂-, , ,



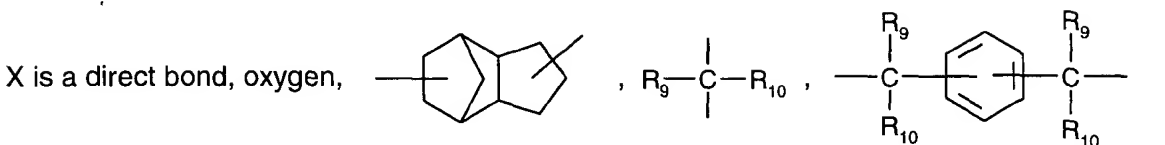
R₁, R₂, R₃ and R₄ independently of one another are hydrogen, C₁-C₂₅alkyl, C₅-C₁₂cycloalkyl, unsubstituted or C₁-C₄alkyl-substituted phenyl; C₇-C₉phenylalkyl, hydroxyl, C₁-C₂₅alkoxy or -O-CN, with the proviso that at least one of the radicals R₁, R₂, R₃ and R₄ is -O-CN,

R₅, R₆, R₇ and R₈ independently of one another are hydrogen, C₁-C₂₅alkyl, C₅-C₁₂cycloalkyl, unsubstituted or C₁-C₄alkyl-substituted phenyl; C₇-C₉phenylalkyl, hydroxyl, C₁-C₂₅alkoxy or -O-CN, with the proviso that at least one of the radicals R₅, R₆, R₇ and R₈ is -O-CN,

R₉ and R₁₀ independently of one another are hydrogen, C₁-C₁₂alkyl, trifluoromethyl or phenyl, or R₉ and R₁₀, together with the carbon atom to which they are attached, form a C₅-C₈cycloalkylidene ring which is unsubstituted or is substituted by 1 to 3 C₁-C₄alkyls; and

R₁₁ is hydrogen or C₁-C₁₂alkyl.

6. (original) A process according to claim 5, wherein



$\text{C}_2\text{-C}_{12}$ alkylene or $\text{C}_2\text{-C}_{12}$ alkenylene,

R_1 , R_2 , R_3 and R_4 independently of one another are hydrogen, $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_{18}$ alkyl, $\text{C}_5\text{-C}_8$ cycloalkyl, phenyl, benzyl, $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_{18}$ alkoxy or $-\text{O-CN}$, with the proviso that at least one of the radicals R_1 , R_2 , R_3 or R_4 is $-\text{O-CN}$,

R_5 , R_6 , R_7 and R_8 independently of one another are hydrogen, $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_{18}$ alkyl, $\text{C}_5\text{-C}_8$ cycloalkyl, phenyl, benzyl, $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_{18}$ alkoxy or $-\text{O-CN}$, with the proviso that at least one of the radicals R_5 , R_6 , R_7 or R_8 is $-\text{O-CN}$, and

R_9 and R_{10} independently of one another are hydrogen, $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_8$ alkyl, trifluoromethyl or phenyl, or R_9 and R_{10} , together with the carbon atom to which they are attached, form a $\text{C}_5\text{-C}_6$ cyclo-alkylidene ring.

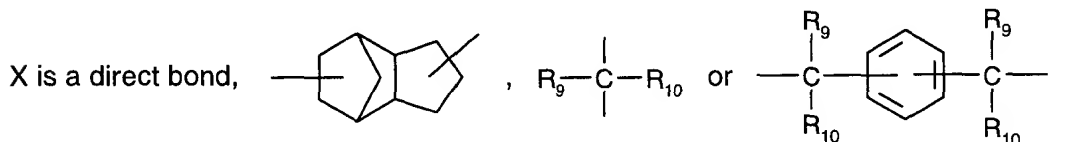
7. (original) A process according to claim 5, wherein

R_1 and R_5 are hydrogen,

R_2 , R_4 , R_6 and R_8 are hydrogen or methyl, and

R_3 and R_7 are $-\text{O-CN}$.

8. (original) A process according to claim 5, wherein



R_1 is hydrogen,

R_2 is hydrogen or $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_4$ alkyl,

R_3 is $-\text{O-CN}$,

R_4 is hydrogen or $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_4$ alkyl,

R_5 is hydrogen,

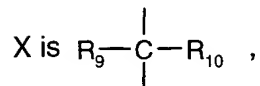
R_6 is hydrogen or $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_4$ alkyl,

R_7 is $-\text{O-CN}$,

R₈ is hydrogen or C₁-C₄alkyl, and

R₉ and R₁₀ independently of one another are hydrogen, methyl or trifluoromethyl.

9. (original) A process according to claim 5, wherein



R₁ and R₂ are hydrogen,

R₃ is -O-CN,

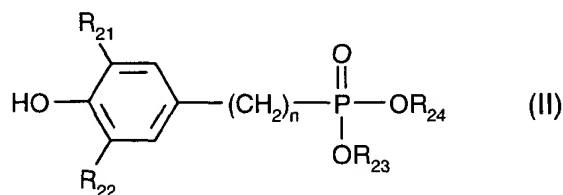
R₄, R₅ and R₆ are hydrogen,

R₇ is -O-CN,

R₈ is hydrogen, and

R₉ and R₁₀ independently of one another are hydrogen or methyl.

10. (previously amended) A process according to claim 1, wherein the further compound is a sterically hindered hydroxyphenyl-alkyl-phosphonic ester or monoester of the formula II



in which

R₂₁ is isopropyl, tert-butyl, cyclohexyl or cyclohexyl which is substituted by 1 to 3 C₁-C₄alkyl groups,

R₂₂ is hydrogen, C₁-C₄alkyl, cyclohexyl or cyclohexyl which is substituted by 1 to 3 C₁-C₄alkyl groups,

R₂₃ is C₁-C₂₀alkyl, or unsubstituted or C₁-C₄alkyl-substituted phenyl or naphthyl,

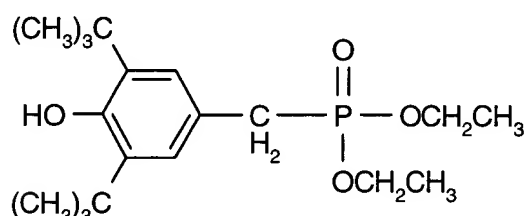
R₂₄ is hydrogen, C₁-C₂₀alkyl, unsubstituted or C₁-C₄alkyl-substituted phenyl or naphthyl; or is $\frac{M^{r+}}{r}$,

M^{r+} is an r-valent metal cation,

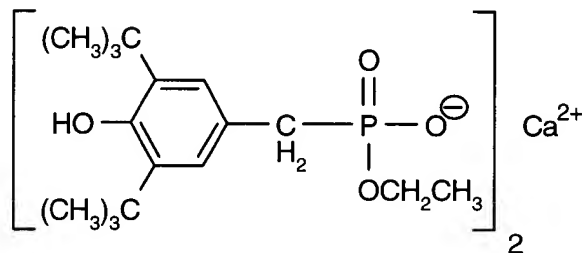
n is 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6, and

r is 1, 2 or 3.

11. (previously amended) A process according to claim 1, wherein the further compound is a sterically hindered hydroxyphenyl-alkyl-phosphonic ester or monoester of the formula IIa or IIb



(IIa)

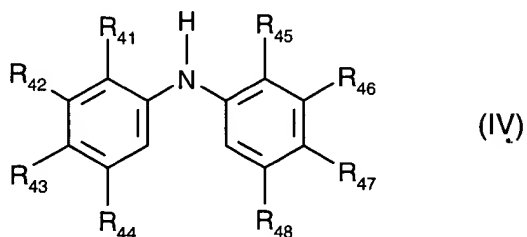


(IIb)

12. (canceled)

13. (canceled)

14. (previously amended) A process according to claim 1, wherein the further compound is a secondary aromatic amine of the formula IV



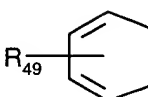
(IV)

in which

R₄₁ is hydrogen or C₁-C₂₅alkyl,

R₄₂ is hydrogen, C₁-C₂₅alkyl or benzyl,

R₄₃ is hydrogen, C₁-C₂₅alkyl, C₅-C₁₂cycloalkyl, benzyl, α-methylbenzyl or α,α-dimethylbenzyl; or R₄₂

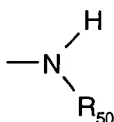
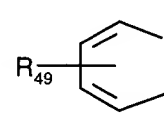
and R₄₃ together form a divalent group ,

R₄₄ is hydrogen, C₁-C₂₅alkyl or benzyl,

R₄₅ is hydrogen or C₁-C₂₅alkyl,

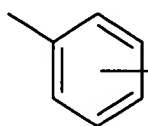
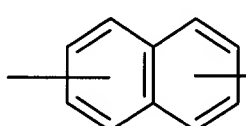
R₄₆ is hydrogen, C₁-C₂₅alkyl or benzyl,

R₄₇ is hydrogen, C₁-C₂₅alkyl, C₅-C₁₂cycloalkyl, benzyl, α-methylbenzyl, α,α-dimethylbenzyl or

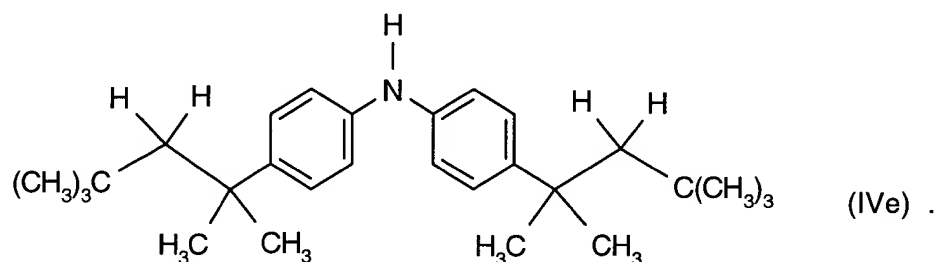
; or R₄₆ and R₄₇ together form a divalent group ,

R₄₈ is hydrogen, C₁-C₂₅alkyl or benzyl,

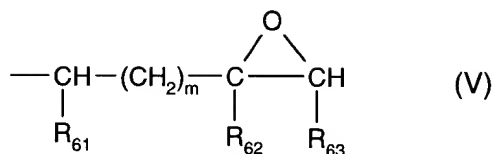
R₄₉ is hydrogen or C₁-C₂₅alkyl, and

R₅₀ is C₅-C₁₂cycloalkyl,  or .

15. (previously amended) A process according to claim 1, wherein the further compound is a secondary aromatic amine of the formula IVe



16. (original) A process according to claim 3, wherein the difunctional epoxide is a compound which contains epoxide radicals of the formula V



which are attached directly to carbon, oxygen, nitrogen or sulfur atoms and in which R₆₁ and R₆₃ are both hydrogen, R₆₂ is hydrogen or methyl and m is 0; or in which R₆₁ and R₆₃ together are -CH₂CH₂- or -CH₂CH₂CH₂-, R₆₂ is then hydrogen and m is 0 or 1.

17. (currently amended) A process according to claim 3, wherein the difunctional epoxide is an epoxide of the bisphenol A diglycidyl ether or bisphenol F diglycidyl ether type.

18. (previously amended) A process according to claim 1, wherein from 0.01 to 5 parts by weight of the aromatic dicyanate are employed per 100 parts by weight of the polyester or copolyester.

19. (currently amended) A process according to claim 1, wherein from 0.01 to 5 parts by weight of the compounds selected from the group consisting of the sterically hindered hydroxyphenyl-alkyl-phosphonic esters or monoesters, diphosphonites and secondary aromatic amines are employed per 100 parts by weight of the polyester or copolyester.

20. (previously amended) A process according to claim 3, wherein from 0.01 to 5 parts by weight of the difunctional epoxide are employed per 100 parts by weight of the polyester or copolyester.

21. (canceled)

22. (canceled)

23. (original) A process according to claim 1, wherein the polyester is a polyethylene terephthalate or polybutylene terephthalate or a corresponding recyclate or copolymer thereof.

24. (previously amended) A process according to claim 1, wherein the polyester is a polybutylene terephthalate/polycarbonate blend or a blend comprising predominantly polybutylene terephthalate/polycarbonate or a corresponding recyclate or a blend of a recyclate and a virgin polymer component.

Claims 25-31. (canceled)